1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard AV3

000 Although the period may be past in which a great English Journal could ask, "*what* is Gilgit?" the contradictory telegrams and newspaper accounts which we receive regarding the countries adjoining Gilgit show that the Press has still much to learn. Names of places, as far apart as Edinburgh and London, are put within a day's march on foot. Names of men figure on maps as places and the relationships of the Chiefs of the region in question are invented or confounded as may suit the politics of the moment, if not the capacity of the printer. The injunctions of the Decalogue are applied or misapplied, extended or curtailed, to suit immediate convenience, and a different standard of morality is constantly being found for our friends of to-day or our foes of to-morrow. The youth Afzul-ul-Mulk was credited with all human virtues and with even more than British manliness, as he was supposed to be friendly to us. He had given his country into our hands in order to receive our support against his elder brother, the acknowledged heir of the late Aman-ul-Mulk of Chitrál, but that elder brother, Nizám-ul-Mulk, was no less friendly to English interests, although he has the advantage of being a man of capacity and independence. The sudden death of Aman-ul-Mulk coincided with the presence of our protégé at Chitrál, and the first thing that the virtuous Afzul-ul-Mulk did, was to invite as many brothers as were within reach to a banquet when he murdered them. No doubt, as a single-minded potentate, he did not wish to be diverted from the task of governing his country by the performance of social duties to the large circle of acquaintances in brothers and their families which Providence bestows on a native ruler or claimant in Chitrál and Yasin. A member of the Khushwaqtia dynasty of Yasin, which is a branch of the Chitrál dynasty, told me when I expressed my astonishment at the constant murders in his family: "A real relative in a high family is a person whom God points out to one to kill as an obstacle in one's way, whereas a foster-relative (generally

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1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard AV3
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of a lower class) is a true friend who rises and falls with one's own fortune" (it being the custom for a scion of a noble house to be given out to a nurse.)

The dynasty of Chitrál is said to have been established by Baba Ayub, an adventurer of Khorassan. He adopted the already existing name of *Katór*, whence the dynasty is called Katoré. The Emperor Baber refers to the country of Katór in his Memoirs and a still more ancient origin has been found in identifying Katór with "Kitolo, the King of the Great Yuechi, who, in the beginning of the 5th century, conquered Balkh and Gandhara, and whose son established the Kingdom of the Little Yuechi, at Peshawur." (See Biddulph's "Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh," page 148.) General Cunningham asserts that the King of Chitrál takes the title of Shah Kator, which has been held for nearly 2,000 years, and the story of their descent from Alexander may be traced to the fact that they were the successors of the Indo-Grecian Kings in the Kabul valley. If Katór is a corruption of Kaisar, then let it not be said that the remnant of the Katoré exclaimed with the Roman gladiator: "Ave, Kaisar-i-Hind, morituri te salutant."

Amán-ul-Mulk, the late ruler of Chitrál, was, indeed, a terrible man, who to extraordinary courage joined the arts of the diplomatist. He succeeded his elder brother, surnamed Adam-Khôr or "man-eater." His younger brother, Mir Afzul, is said to have been killed by him or to have committed a convenient suicide; another brother, Sher Afzul, who is now in possession of Chitrál, was long a fugitive in Badakhshan whence he has just returned with a few Afghans (such as any pretender can ever collect) and a hundred of the Chitráli slaves that used to be given in tribute to the Mir of Badakhshan, which itself never paid a tribute to Kabul before the late Sher Ali of Afghanistan installed Mahmud Shah, who expelled his predecessor Jehandar Shah, the friend of Abdur-Rahman, the present Amir of Afghanistan. Another brother of Aman-ul-Mulk

Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 AU1 Afghanistan-AU1
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increases in density. Forty miles below Chitral a route leads from the main valley past Ashuret over the Lowri Pass to the Afghan state of Dir. Twenty miles lower down, at Birkot, is the mouth of the valley inhabited by the Siah Posh of the Bushgali tribe, the upper end of which is entered from the Dorah Pass. Several smaller valleys are inhabited by Siah Posh, who have lost their independence, and at Bailam the southernmost Kashkar village is passed, and the Afghan state of Asmar is reached. The boundary between Kashkar and Asmar is marked by a wall built across the valley on the right bank between Bailam and Nawakali, and on the left bank by the small stream below Saoo. The valley for many miles above the boundary is reputed to be extraordinarily fertile.

Chitral, which is the seat of the ruler of Kashkar, comprises six large villages, which extend for 3 miles along both sides of the river at an elevation of about 4,000 feet. Its name has gradually come to be applied to the whole country. On the right bank is the fort in which the Mihter, or Badshah, —for he is known by both titles,—resides. Half a mile above the fort is an excellent wooden bridge protected by a stone tower at each end. All the forts in Kashkar differ in construction from those inhabited by the Shin and Boorish races, having inordinately high towers rising 18 feet above the ramparts, which are themselves 30 feet high. Their distribution also gives evidence of a more secure state of society. Instead of every village having one, and sometimes two, forts sufficient to hold all the inhabitants, as is the case in the valleys draining directly into the Indus, the only forts in Kashkar are the abodes of rulers of districts, or persons nearly related to the ruler.

The ruling family are styled Katooré, from Shah Katoor, brother of Shah Khushwakt, the ancestor of the reigning family of Yassin; but the name Kator seems to have been applied to the country in former times, before the existence of the present dynasty of rulers. The present Mihter, Aman-ool-Mulk, is about 58 years of age, and notorious for his astute and deceitful character. The number of the population he rules over can only be roughly computed, and probably amounts to less than 200,000 souls. These numbers would appear scanty for so large an extent of country, but the population is wholly agricultural, and, as in all these very mountainous countries, the habitations are, with few exceptions, confined to a narrow strip along the sides of streams.

4: Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 AV3 Dard AV3
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the top of the head for a space 2 inches broad in front, tapering to half an inch behind. Those who cannot boast of long locks, dress their hair into numerous small cork-screw ringlets all round the head.[1] On the approach of middle age the whole head is shaved, according to the orthodox Mahommedan fashion, and the beard is allowed to grow. In Chitral the effect of the long-flowing locks reaching to the waist is often extremely picturesque.

The mode of salutation between equals, on meeting after a prolonged absence, is graceful and pleasing. After clasping each other, first on one side then on the other, hands are joined, and each person in turn kisses the hand of the other. Superiors are greeted either by kissing the hand or touching the foot, both at meeting and parting. In Chitral, when the meeting is between two of unequal rank, the inferior kisses the hand of the superior, who in return kisses the former on the cheek. A similar practice is said to have existed among the ancient Persians.[2]

On the occasion of the visit of one chief to another, a rather curious ceremony called "Kobah" takes place. On arrival, the visitor is conducted to the Shawaran,[3] and the followers of both chiefs show their dexterity in firing at a mark set up on a tall pole, from horseback while galloping at speed. After this a bullock is led out before the guest, who draws his sword and does his best to cut its head off at a single blow, or deputes one of his followers to do so, and the carcase is given to his retinue. The custom exists in Shighnan, Badakhshan, Wakhan, Chitral, Yassin, Gilgit, Hunza, and Nager. In the latter place it is customary to slay the bullock with bow and arrow. Of late years the practice has become somewhat modified owing to the strict observance of Mahommedan customs, and it is more usual to give over the bullock alive to the guest, so that its throat may be cut in a more orthodox fashion; but occasionally a chief wishing to show off the strength of his arm and the temper of his blade, will adhere to the old custom.

Polygamy is of course practised, and the right of divorce is somewhat wantonly exercised. The marriage of very young children is not common, though occasionally practised. Girls are generally married between the ages of ten and four-

[1] Rawlinson mentions this as an ancient Persian fashion.—*Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. IV.

[2] Strabo Book XV., Chapter 3, Section 20.

[3] The Shawaran answers all the purposes of the village green in England, being used for all gatherings and games.

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3
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CHAPTER II

FIRST VISIT TO CHITRÀL

644 159 175 AFZUL-UL-MULK, second son of the Mehtar or King of Chitral, who had passed the winter in a visit to India, and had been in Kashmir as I passed through, now arrived in Gilgit, and came to see me. He was generally known in Chitral as the Tsik Mehtar, or little Mehtar, his elder brother Nizam-ul-Mulk, in consideration of being heir-apparent, having the title of Sirdar. He was a good-looking young man with beautiful eyes and well-shaped face, the mouth being the bad part, the lower lip of which was heavy. It was the family feature, borne by every Katúr, as the clan of the ruling family was called. Colonel Lockhart had taken a great fancy to Afzul-ul-Mulk, and he had certainly a taking personality. Bright, cheery, of an enquiring turn of mind, talking Persian fluently, as does every gentleman in the Hindu-Kush, interested in everything he had seen in India, realising what the British power meant better than his father, who had never left Chitral, and extravagantly loyal, open-handed, courteous to all, young, handsome, hospitable, a good shot, and, for a Chitrali, a fine rider, it would have been curious if he had failed to be popular. But there was a different side to his

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3
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character, as I very soon learnt. At heart he was a pure savage, a mixture of the monkey and the tiger. Loyal from calculation, and from hopes of being recognised by Government as the heir-apparent, he was, under his cloak of open bonhomie, generosity, and transparent honesty, the most persistent plotter, and the most treacherous and ruthless foe. At his father's death he very naturally seized the throne, and his elder brother fled the country, defeated by superior powers of intrigue. But with all his cunning Afzul-ul-Mulk was a fool. He tried to strike terror by cutting down the leading men; he cut down too many or too few. The cold-blooded and treacherous murder of three brothers would have passed with little comment, the death of leading adherents of his brother was natural, but the announcement that a list of head men existed, who were to be killed, and the uncertainty as to whose turn was to come next, were too much. A carefully prepared plot, hatched in Afghanistan, overthrew him; his trusted adherents betrayed him, his most confidential servant opened the gates of his fort and let in the enemy, and he fell as he had risen, by treachery and murder.

However, at the moment, everything was rosy. No shadows of coming events chilled us, and I gladly arranged to accept the Mehtar's invitation to visit his country, so courteously delivered by Afzul. It was decided that he should move on ahead of me, as he took up a great deal of carriage, and that he should await me at Mastuj, the headquarters of the district he governed. I wanted a few days to arrange about my carriage, and to take farewell of my Kashmiri friends, to each one of whom I had to

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3
Chitral

643 usual, a present, in this case a small round looking-
681 glass in a brass cover, a thing much prized in these parts. He declined to receive it, and said the last man had got five rupees and a knife, and that he would not take less. It would have been impossible to carry on if I allowed myself to be rushed for presents in this way, so I dismissed him, and sending for the Mehtar's half-brother, who was accompanying me, explained the man's impertinence to him. The result was startling; the old gentleman was furious, said that, had we been in Chitral territory, he would have cut the man to pieces at once, and that the Mehtar would certainly, if he heard of it, kill the man and sell his wife and children for slaves. I interceded for him, and he got off without punishment, but it gave one an idea of how the Mehtar ruled, and why he was obeyed as he was.

159 Nizam-ul-Mulk met us the first march across the border, and was with us a couple of days. He was a handsomer man than his brother, but had the same heavy under-lip. His manners were charming, but his morals, like those of almost every leading man in the country, excepting the Mehtar, Afzul, and one or two others, left much to be desired. He
• [644] was a worse governor than Afzul, a mixture of cruelty, indolence, and good-nature, but he was popular too in his way, being a fine shikari. He was always accompanied by his dancing and singing boys, without whom he would move nowhere, and he was consequently an intolerable nuisance on the march, as they kept up their music right through the night. During his first interview with me he

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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Afzul fairly took my breath away one day during 644
the performance by calling to one of his attendant 515
courtiers, and by blowing his nose on the end of the
latter's turban.

Here we first got the splendid white grape, reserved 262
for the royal family. It almost equals the finest 245
muscatel grown in an English hothouse. Properly
cultivated, it would be about the best grape in the
world. It is said to have been imported from Central
Asia.

Our reception at Mastuj was very striking. Afzul 644
had joined us the day before, and had with him some 291
hundred and fifty mounted men, who formed an 411
irregular bodyguard. They were ablaze with colour;
their chogas of gold kinkob, green and blue velveta,
gorgeous silks of Bokhara, or brilliant broadcloths,
floated loose over bright silk or coloured cotton under-
coats; their voluminous breeches were tucked into
high brown or black boots, or merely into the
gay-patterned knitted woollen stockings which all
Chitralis wear. Every man was armed to the teeth.
All had a rifle or gun slung over the shoulder;
most had a polished metal or leather shield on the
back; nearly all, in addition to a sword, carried
a dagger and pistol stuck in the belt. On narrow
portions of the road they could only go in single file,
some ahead of us and some behind, but as we got into
more open ground they swarmed all round us. As
we approached the fort of Mastuj itself, a horseman
would suddenly single himself out from the crowd and
dash down hill at breakneck speed, circle over the
small cultivated space near the fort, and join the men
waiting to receive us. These notabilities of Afzul's 644
Government, to the number of a hundred, stood in

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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644 one long line before the entrance to the fort, and as we approached they advanced all together and bowed as one man; the effect of the dignified Eastern salaam so given was fine.

262 We had our first Chitrali dinner at Mastuj, and excellent it was. It was served under the great plane tree which shaded the gate of the fort, on a raised platform running round the trunk. This must have been the place of gossip and assembly for the last two hundred years or more. The dinner consisted of pillaus of all sorts, one excellent pillau of beef being on a huge dish, three feet across, piled high with rice. [272] The drink was water cooled with snow. After dinner we were given little cups of tea, with salt in it instead [264] of sugar, a most atrocious mixture. I barely tasted mine, but Robertson, who had insisted on our dining *à la Chitrali*, using our fingers for forks, a most unpleasant and greasy proceeding, drank the whole of his at a draught. He was no companion to me for the rest of the day.

431 After breakfast was over Afzul came out and gave us the usual presents — horses, pieces of Bokhara silk, caps and waist-belts embroidered by the women of his household. By the time I left Chitral I had a string of about twenty horses of sorts, most of them dreadful screws, but useful on the march to mount orderlies and servants. I got rid of a good many in presents on my way down through Punyal, and the rest were sold, together with all other presents received, in India, and their value, as is the custom in these cases, credited to the Foreign Office Toshekhana or treasure-house.

000 We remained at Mastuj about a week to give the

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AVI Kashmir
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had to use your hands to steady yourself. Afzul put on all the royal Chitrali airs at once, and had to be helped down, a man on each side of him and his arms round their necks. An affected limpness came over him, and he flopped down the hill like an animated rag doll, only to recover when we got on to more rideable ground, where he was hoisted on his horse and was at once himself again. 159

On my return to Mastuj I found awaiting me Jemadar Rab Nawaz Khan, a native officer of good family in Multan, who was our representative in Chitral, and two more of the Mehtar's sons. They had been sent by the Mehtar to escort me to Chitral. I gathered that the Mehtar was expecting magnificent presents from me, and that he had given strict injunctions that I was to be nursed and prevented from wasting my substance on giving any one else anything. 644

I found that the Chitralis who had been to India with Nizam and Afzul during the last two years could and would talk of nothing but the Mint at Calcutta. Afzul's followers also expatiated on the beauties of a British cavalry regiment seen at Rawal Pindi. But, unfortunately, those in charge of the tours of these savages had taken them all round India, and had practically shown them no troops. The triumphs of local self-government at Calcutta and Bombay did not impress them, their own villages were almost as filthy; the railway was a convenient curiosity, but it obviously could only run about on the flat; the plains of India, one sea of crops, were a source of wonder, and suggested untold loot; but the real joy was the Mint. Constantly we 644 484 177

4: Durand G-8 (1888-93) 1900 AVI Kashmir
Dard AvJ
Chitral

were told of its wonders, how it could turn out fourteen lakhs of rupees a day—a lakh is a hundred thousand—how it coined every day in the year without cessation. The Kashmir officer with us, with what object it was not necessary to enquire (every man in his position must intrigue, and has an axe of his own to grind), capped these stories by informing the Chitralis that our rulers never were at a loss for the white metal, as we could turn copper into silver.

Altogether I soon saw that my prospects of satisfying everybody, or for the matter of that, anybody, were remote. My difficulties would have been much lightened in Chitral had Nizam and Afzul gone through, during their visit to India, a course of sight-seeing at some big military centre. Twenty thousand men on parade, "horse, foot, and dragoons," would have given them and their headmen a much more intelligent appreciation of what the power of the Government of India meant than could wandering about cotton and jute mills, or being driven through foul and crowded bazaars.

Between Mastuj and Chitral we found at Sanoghar, Buni, and other places, miles of splendid cultivation, and we saw above us, on the right bank of the river, the extensive fields of the Murikho valley. But for the most part the road was, as before, extremely difficult: the last couple of marches it was purposely left in the worst condition, running through gorges and along cliffs on rickety brackets which could be destroyed in a moment.

Glacial action is again well marked below Mastuj, the road running over huge masses of rock, rounded,

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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gather the wild flowers as he passed them, and stick them into his turban. As a race they are slight and wiry; there were only half a dozen tall men in the country, and I never saw a fat one. This is no doubt partly due to the fact that there is no superabundance of food available, but the result is good. The children were really a joy to see; they had bright rosy cheeks and well-shaped faces; and the small girls, who were not kept within doors, were in many cases extremely pretty.

As we neared Chitral we were met by an increasing number of grandees, of regularly increasing rank. Eight miles from Chitral itself my old friend Raja Bahadur Khan, the Mehtar's half-brother, received me. I never understood how he had acquired a Hindu title, but in the Hindu-Kush they are not very particular. Half a mile further on, after passing through the narrowest part of a gorge along a path a foot wide, pegged on to the rock—one of the few places not even a Chitrali would ride over—a mass of armed men met us. One of them presented me from the Mehtar with a horse most gorgeously caparisoned with gold embossed head-stall, high demi-pique saddle—instrument of torture for an Englishman accustomed to the familiar Whippy—and prettily embroidered and spangled body cloth. Another half mile and the river leaves the gorge, and on the opposite side there is an isolated rocky mound, along the top of which were ranged some two hundred men, who fired a wild *feu de joie* as we passed. A mile or so further we emerged into the plain, and saw the Mehtar sitting surrounded by a brilliant crowd. Dismounting when about one hundred and fifty yards from him, I

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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643 walked forward, the Mehtar walking to meet me half way. It was an interesting moment for both of us, as we shook hands and looked into each other's eyes. 159 The Mehtar was a big man, and heavy, about sixty-five years of age, with a very strong and clever face, but the mouth was spoilt by the loss of his front teeth.

644 291 After a few words of welcome we mounted our horses, and rode off. The Mehtar was surrounded by his court, Afzul-ul-Mulk and various other sons were there, and representative nobles from all parts of the country. The scene was one of the most brilliant and striking it is possible to imagine. It could not compare with the more ordered magnificence of the court of an Indian prince, but what was lost in splendour and numbers was made up by its wild picturesqueness. The Mehtar, dressed in green silk (he was a most devout Mahomedan), riding a big horse covered with brilliant silver trappings, moved off, with me on his right hand, the centre of a crowd of hundreds of horsemen and footmen in the brightest array. Cloth of gold, the rich silks of Central Asia, the most superb velvet coats, the colour almost hidden by the gold embroidery, the brightest English and Chinese silks in all colours, scarlets and blues, crimsons and purple, plain and brocaded, chogas of plain whole-coloured velvets, or of English broadcloths, flaring cottons, and the dull, brown haircloth of the country were all mingled without the semblance of order in inextricable confusion. The only appearance of uniform was in the Mehtar's *corps de ballet*, all the men and boys of which were dressed alike in blue sleeveless coats over white muslin shirts covered with

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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huge red spots, finished off with bright red trousers, a costume at once startling and effective.

We rode in this way three miles to the bridge, which we dismounted to cross, then on past the fort, which Robertson was a few years later to know so well, and to assist in defending so splendidly, to the polo ground. There the usual performance was gone through, but on a greater scale than I had seen before, with many more riders and more brilliantly arrayed. Then we rode back to my camp, which was in an orchard a few hundred yards from the fort, I having had quite enough of riding hand-in-hand with my host, a custom which, however honourable, involves you in difficulties when you have to ride over small stone walls, narrow water-courses, and in and out of deep ravines. The Mehtar took his leave after a few minutes' conversation, and soon after sent us in a most excellent dinner cooked by the ladies of his household. In the couple of hours I had been with him he had made a deep impression on me. He was a fine old man, a striking figure as he rode along, sitting his horse upright and well; and had the history of his forty years of rule been unknown, there was that in him which attracted your attention at once. I felt instinctively that I was face to face with a ruler of men.

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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MEHTAR AMAN-UL-MULK AND SONS. HIS SUCCESSOR, AFZUL-UL-MULK, SEATED ON HIS RIGHT.

[facing p. 76]

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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started a conflagration. In the end, whether my counsel had anything to do with it or not, the old gentleman decided to sit on the fence and do nothing. 643 648 159

The Mehtar's views on the condition of frontier affairs were interesting, and his knowledge of men and matters varied and wide. A man does not rule a frontier state forty years for nothing. He saw that, so far as his dynasty and country were concerned, safety lay in alliance with us, danger in any closer intercourse with Afghanistan. For this reason he was delighted to have an unconquered Kafiristan on his flank as a buffer between him and the "God-given Government." He might occasionally, in retaliation for too numerous murders on the part of the Kafirs, raid their country with the object of getting some slaves, but he had no desire to see it conquered, and he was delighted that the Kafirs made the road down towards Asmar, and up the Ashreth valley to the Lowari pass, their happy hunting-ground, and murdered stray Pathans. The more dangerous the road was, the more isolated and safe his state. We discussed many questions, to which I cannot refer, with daily increasing interest and amusement on my part. Some of his ideas with all his shrewdness were very quaint; one of his most persistent demands was that, given any agreement with Government, it should be engraved on a sheet of copper. Some ruffian had persuaded him that no treaty would be binding on us if only written on paper. [721]

My state visit to the Mehtar was most ceremonious. A deputation of his courtiers came and escorted us to the fort, at the gate of which the Mehtar met us, and conducted us to a daïs outside, 644

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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644 under some magnificent chenar trees. It was a very picturesque sight: row after row of the Mehtar's sons and courtiers in the most brilliant dresses sat on each side of us on the ground, in
644 the shade of the trees. The usual band, composed
533 of half a dozen kettle-drums played with sticks,
535 double-headed drums played with the hand, and pipes, struck up, and the *corps de ballet* of men and boys, in their smart new uniform, dashed into the space in front of the daïs and began dancing. The dances, as a rule, are much the same as the Indian *nautch*, but a trifle quicker and more varied. There are, however, some very quick and lively dances full of energy, where the men dash round with flying steps, and one or two rather good sword dances, which are worth seeing.

The Chitralis will dance, and look on at dancing, all night long; they are passionately fond of it; the only thing which they will stop it for is to hear their boys sing. The songs are the usual love songs with occasional songs of war. I never picked up enough of the language to understand them, but some of the airs were charming, and deserve to be collected. I was always thankful when the boys came on instead of the dancers. The boys' voices are really beautiful, and one would willingly have called for them oftener had it been possible to do so without giving the enemy cause to blaspheme. They had a pleasant way sometimes at night, as you sat round a camp fire smoking, of bringing a boy, and starting him singing in the darkness behind you. Very pretty plaintive melodies they sang, accompanied by a few notes of the pipe.

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The chorus at the Mehtar's durbar was composed of all his men off duty, men from all the neighbouring villages who had come to see the fun, a stray Kafir or two who grinned in a friendly way at us, all the heterogeneous rabble possible to collect in Chitral. The price they paid for being present and looking at the dancing was continued applause, shouts of encouragement to the dancers, in which they were led by an official who was described as the head of the Mehtar's household. He was a very wild-looking creature, who rushed along the ranks of the spectators dressed in a scarlet cloth choga, and armed with a big ornamented stick, with which he belaboured any of the crowd who did not shout loud enough. After we had sat through the performance for some time the Mehtar rose, and, taking me by the hand, escorted me along a narrow path made by laying down cotton cloth, white and coloured, and stuffs of various kinds, finishing in a strip of sham kinkob, all of which became the perquisite of my servants after I had passed over it. The path led along the faces of the fort to the private garden, from which there was a door leading to the household offices and ladies' apartments. In the garden we found a tent pitched, into which we entered, followed by three or four of the Mehtar's most important sons and nobles.

Directly we had sat down the Mehtar began an oration which lasted an hour, with interruptions to drink iced water, and to rub snuff on his gums, the Chitrali way of taking this most seductive form of the weed. The upshot of his discourse was that

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
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643 he was a faithful servant of the British Government, and that he wanted various things, mostly
648 rifles and money. Some of his remarks were
159 amusing, as when looking a Kashmiri officer full in the face he said that he had been in the habit, in the old days, of beating the Kashmiris and looting them, but that out of consideration for us he had abandoned this source of revenue. All this time I was getting horribly hungry; we generally breakfasted about eleven, and had been fetched away from camp just before our breakfast was ready, and it was long past two before the Mehtar showed signs of having talked himself out. There was nothing for me to say beyond the usual diplomatic *banalités* about the assurances I had received from the Viceroy's and the Foreign Secretary's lips of the interest felt by the Government in the welfare of Chitral, and of their personal regard for the renowned chief who ruled its destinies. The whole thing was a sort of full-dress debate, the object of which, on the Mehtar's part, was to let it be known throughout Chitral, and in the adjacent Pathan countries, Asmar, Dir, and Bajour, that he was definitely putting himself on the side of the British Government, and under its powerful protection.

644 The Mehtar, having thoroughly talked himself out,
262 departed, leaving Afzul-ul-Mulk to do host. The dinner was excellent of its kind, and we were introduced to various famous royal dishes, about the best being large flat unleavened cakes of bread full of minced meat, and sweet omelets made with honey.

000 I remained some time in Chitral, seeing the

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willow shaded off into the dark red of the rose thickets. 000

On our way down we branched off to try and get some shooting. We got none, but were amply repaid by the magnificent scenery. We camped one night at an altitude of about twelve thousand feet on a hillside so steep that our small tent could only be pitched by raising one pole on a pile of stones, and our bed places had to be similarly built up. We here got an insight into the reckless way the Chitralis destroy their timber. Some of our hosts' followers were belated, and in order to attract their attention, the men with us calmly fired a patch of forest. The next morning we rode up and crossed the shoulder of the range we were on at a height of sixteen thousand feet. I was pretty well accustomed by then to riding over anything, but we crossed ground that day that a few months before I should have considered impossible for a horse—long, sloping stretches of shaley rock across which our horses picked their way in the most extraordinary manner. The view from the top was grand: right opposite us, with only one range of lower mountains in between, rose Tirich Mir, twenty-five thousand feet high; no cloud obscured the view, and so close did we seem that every turn of the glaciers could be traced, and the lines of the avalanches distinctly seen.

The Mehtar came out to see me at Shoghot, and we spent another day together. With him was his son-in-law Rahat Mian, a Kaka-Kheyl timber merchant from within our borders, and at the moment the most important man in Chitral, as the Mehtar trusted almost implicitly in his advice. Our Native [644] 662

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Finally, dropping into the bed of the Turikho river, we reached Drasan, Afzul-ul-Mulk's favourite residence, a fort of the usual type, square, with high corner towers, and were given a right royal reception. Nizam-ul-Mulk was very anxious for me to go and see him in Turikho, but the passes out were under snow, and I could not afford to go twice over the same ground very far, so I had, much to my regret, to decline. This was rather unfortunate, as Afzul-ul-Mulk was thereby given another opportunity of entertaining me, which delighted him very much, but made his brother and his brother's retainers perfectly furious. It was very disappointing for me also, as I wanted to make friends with all equally, and, moreover, it prevented my visiting the Baroghil, one of the most important passes over the Hindu-Kush. But with snow falling every night marches over glaciers were not to be lightly undertaken; even over some of the rocky marches the roads would have been dangerous. There is nothing worse than floundering over rocks you cannot see, hidden by a covering of new snow which gives no foothold to man or beast.

So we marched into Mastuj again, and after a day spent in sorting out our kit, we despatched our servants, heavy baggage, and extra horses towards Gilgit by the road we had come, while we ourselves started for another tour. We cut ourselves down to the strictest necessities, one small tent, seven feet square, for the two of us, one for orderlies and servants, no beds, tables, chairs, or unnecessary luxuries, for I meant to double march steadily for a fortnight. Every follower was mounted, and we managed to do all we wanted.

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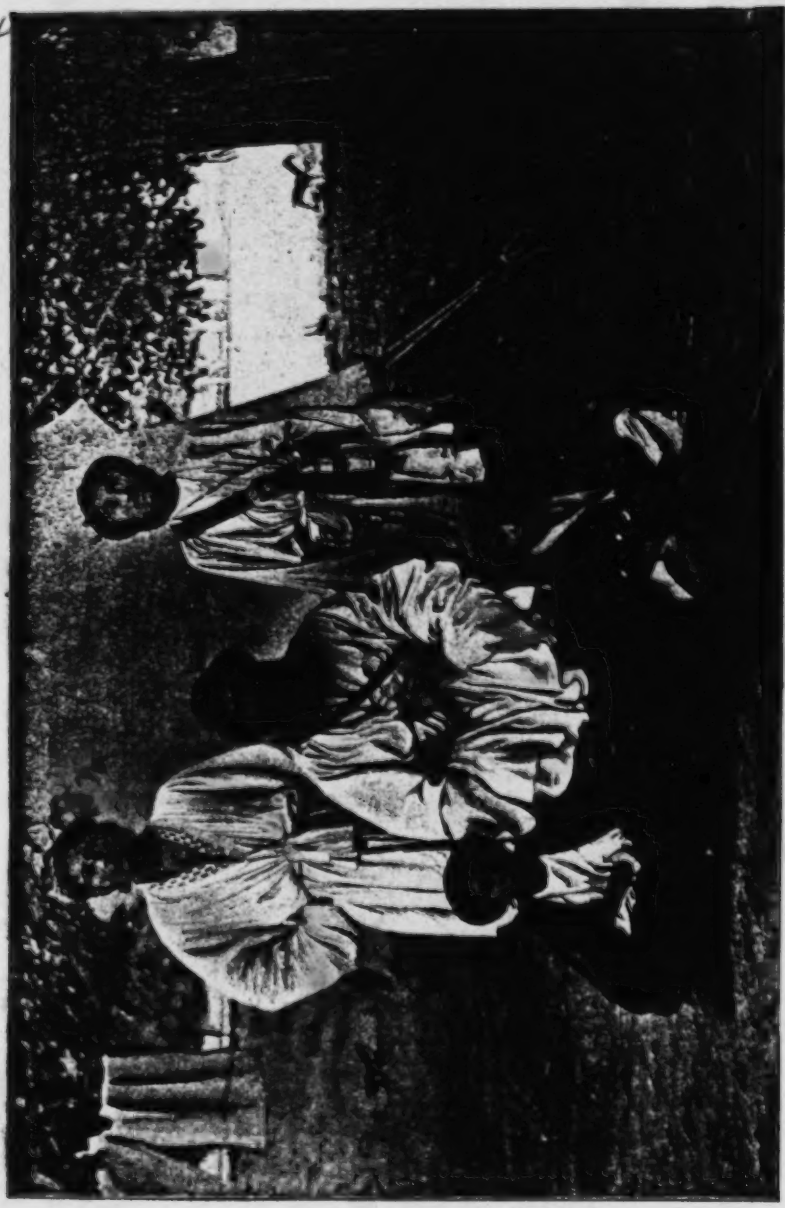

RAJA AKBAR KHAN OF PUNYAL, AND NEPHEWS.

[facing p. 108]

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536 supplied by the Pathan's servant, who was kicked by all his masters.

000 We were much amused one day at our old native doctor, whom we were taking up to establish the Chitral dispensary. The road ran for a mile or more along the face of a conglomerate cliff, about sixty feet above the river. It had been much improved, and was six feet wide. We had swung along this at a canter, and turned a sharp corner where the path ran up into a side ravine and was steep and narrow. I was leading, and just had time to pull up to prevent riding over the native doctor, who, on all fours, and with a huge blinker of thick paper fixed to the side of his head to prevent his seeing the precipice, was crawling up what he considered the most dangerous piece on his hands and knees. The poor old gentleman never got accustomed to the cliffs, always vowed that he would return to India by Bajour to avoid them, and eventually did so.

• 644 The Mehtar met me some miles from Chitral, as he had done before, and, coming officially as we were, we of course got into uniform. The show was not so fine as the year before, as one of his grandsons was dead, and he had sent a lot of men down the valley to the obsequies. Moreover, he informed me that he had hundreds of men watching the passes into his country. This I knew was untrue, but it was said to emphasise the need of assistance from Government on his part, and the danger of his position from the Amir and others. The reception does not need describing. A Janáli was improvised on our way in, so that we were saved an extra three-mile ride to the polo ground and back; the guns thundered from the

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fort, and we were escorted by the Mehtar, surrounded by a brilliant crowd of retainers, to our quiet camp in the well-remembered orchard The day was hot and the dust blinding, and we were delighted when the old Chief, with his tactful courtesy, having seen us home, left us in peace.

Next morning the Mehtar came with a legion of sons, and we received him in uniform, and with a guard-of-honour. He at once began talking business, but as I did not want to discuss my instructions *coram populo*, I turned the conversation first on to Robertson going to Kafiristan, to which he at once assented, and then to the establishment of the dispensary. The native doctor was summoned, and was presented to the Mehtar. I put his hand into the old Chief's, and entrusted him to his care. As usual, the Mehtar's manners were perfect, and he promised to take every care of him, a promise he loyally fulfilled. We then cleared the tent, and proceeded to business, which was concluded in this and following interviews fully to the satisfaction of both sides. The interview closed by my saying that I hoped this would be always remembered as an auspicious day. By the old Mehtar I am glad to think it was, but the seeds of strife sown in his day were even then germinating, and the little kingdom was to reel through a period of battle, murder, and sudden death; the princes, their hands red with brothers' blood, were to go down in rapid succession into the grave, and of all the sons I saw that day but one, then a child of seven, was to weather the storm.

As soon as the Mehtar had departed, Robertson interviewed his Kafirs, and brought them to me to be